

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, GR, PINT
SUBJECT: PAPANDREOU CRITIZES CARAMANLIS ON THE EVE OF HIS
LONDON TRIP

1. OVER THE WEEKEND, PUBLIC ATTENTION IN GREECE SHIFTED TO LONDON WHERE PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS WILL HAVE PERSONAL MEETINGS WITH PRESIDENT CARTER AND OTHER WESTERN LEADERS EARLY THIS WEEK. IN AN OBVIOUS ATTEMPT TO EXPLOIT THIS INTEREST FOR HIS OWN POLITICAL PURPOSES, ON THE EVEN OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S DEPARTURE OPPOSITION LEADER ANDREAS PAPANDREOU, HEAD OF THE SMALL PANHELLENIC SOCIALIST MOVEMENT (PASOK), RELEASED TO THE PRESS AN OPEN LETTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER WHICH IS CRITICAL OF CARAMANLIS. THE MAIN THRUST OF THIS CRITICISM IS THAT THE PRIME MINISTER HAS FAILED TO KEEP THE GREEK PEOPLE INFORMED ON IMPORTANT FOREIGN POLICY AND DEFENSE ISSUES.

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2. IN HIS LETTER PAPANDREOU ALLEGED THE PEOPLE ARE FULL OF "QUESTIONS, DOUBTS AND ANXIETIES" OVER THE PATH BEING PURSUED BY THE CARAMANLIS GOVERNMENT. HE SAID THE GREEK PEOPLE--OR AT LEAST THE LEADERS OF THE OPPOSITION PARTIES--SHOULD HAVE BEEN INFORMED BY THE PRIME MINISTER ON CERTAIN KEY QUESTIONS, ABOUT WHICH, HE COMMENTED, CARAMANLIS WOULD CERTAINLY BRIEF THE FOREIGN LEADERS. ARE NEGOTIATIONS WITH

TURKEY PROGRESSING OR IS A CONFRONTATION IN THE MAKING, HE ASKED. IF GREECE HAS WITHDRAWN FROM THE MILITARY WING OF NATO, HE QUESTIONED, HOW DOES THIS SQUARE WITH THE FACT THAT U.S. NAVAL UNITS CONDUCT LANDINGS ON GREEK TERRITORY (A REFERENCE TO OCCASIONAL PHIBLEX MANEUVERS), SIXTH FLEET VESSELS VISIT GREEK PORTS AND A GOG SPOKESMAN'S RECENT STATEMENT ABOUT POSSIBLE GREEK PARTICIPATION IN NATO EXERCISES IN SEPTEMBER. AN WHAT, PAPANDREOU INQUIRED, IS GOING ON AS FAR AS CYPRUS IS CONCERNED?

3. THE PASOK LEADER CHIDED CARAMANLIS FOR NOT SUPPLYING ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS, AND WARNED IN CONCLUSION " BUT WE WANT YOU TO REMEMBER, ON YOUR TRIP, THAT YOU DO NOT POSSESS GREECE. YOU ARE ONLY ITS PRIME MINISTER. AND CONSEQUENTLY YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE TO THE GREEK PEOPLE." IN RESPONSE TO THE PAPANDREOU LETTER A GOVERNMENT SOURCE COMMENTED AS FOLLOWS: "IT IS OBVIOUS THAT MR. PAPANDREOU SHOULD NOT EXPECT A REPLY TO HIS QUESTIONS, FOR, BY MAKING HIS POINTS PUBLIC... HE SHOWS HIS AIM IS TO MAKE A STIR... THE GOVERNMENT IS HANDLING THE NATIONAL INTERESTS IN A RESPONSIBLE WAY ALONG THE LINES IT HAS CHARTED AND MADE PUBLIC."

4. THE MEDIA OVER THE WEEKEND ALSO GAVE INTENSIFIED COVERAGE TO THE FORTHCOMING MEETINGS CARAMANLIS WILL HAVE IN LONDON WITH SPECIAL FOCUS ON THE SESSION WITH PRESIDENT CARTER. GOG SUPPORTERS EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CARTER-CARAMANLIS ENCOUNTER AND FORESAW THAT "SUBSTANTIVE" ISSUES WOULD BE DISCUSSED, INCLUDING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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U.S.-GREEK BILATERAL RELATIONS, THE AEGEAN QUESTION AND CYPRUS. OPPOSITION NEWSPAPERS WARNED OF THE POSSIBLE PITFALLS INHERENT IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S LONDON MEETINGS, AND SUGGESTED THAT GREAT PRESSURE WOULD BE EXERTED UPON GREECE TO RETURN TO THE NATO FOLD. MEDIA SPECULATION ON WHO WOULD SAY WHAT TO WHOM AND WHEN HAS BEEN RAMPANT. SOME REPORTS CLAIM PRESIDENT CARTER WILL PERSONALLY BECOME THE MEDIATOR BETWEEN GREECE AND TURKEY, WHEREAS OTHERS INTERPRET CLARK CLIFFORD'S PRESENCE IN LONDON AS MEANING HE WILL ASSUME THE MEDIATOR'S ROLE. KUBISCH

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